

IV.5 (note)

LISTON, Robert

Mr. Liston on the respiration of
sulphuric ether.

Boston M. & S.J., Feb. 10, 1847,
36, p. 47.

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IV. 5.

THE LANCET REPRINT

London, 2 Jan. 1847.

Title: Surgical operations performed during insensibility, produced by the inhalation of sulphuric ether. (Communicated by Francis Boott, M.D.). *The Lancet*, 2 January 1847, 1, 5-8.

Note: The original title was not given. Jacob Bigelow, the father of H. J. Bigelow, wrote on 28 November to Francis Boott of London telling him of Morton's discovery and enclosing the text of his son's communication as it had appeared in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*. Boott forwarded Jacob Bigelow's letter and H. J. B.'s paper to *The Lancet* which published them both in their number for 2 January 1847. Appended to the reprint was a letter from Robert Liston to Dr. Boott dated 21 December 1846 saying that on that day he had successfully used ether during an amputation at the knee, thus recording the first operation under ether anesthesia in Europe (see Cöck, p. ??). Liston had learned of Bigelow's letter to Boott on Saturday, the 19th, and carried out his first operation on Monday, the 21st!

Text of Jacob Bigelow's letter (28 November 1846): "My dear Boott,—I send you an account of a new anodyne process lately introduced here, which promises to be one of the important discoveries of the present age. It has rendered many patients insensible to pain during surgical operations, and other causes of suffering. Limbs and breasts have been amputated, arteries tied, tumours ex-

tirpated, and many hundreds of teeth extracted, without any consciousness of the least pain on the part of the patient.

"The inventor is Dr. Morton, a dentist of this city, and the process consists of the inhalation of the vapour of ether to the point of intoxication. I send you the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, which contains an article by my son Henry, and which is extracted from a medical journal, relating to the discovery.

"Let me give you an example. I took my daughter Mary, last week, to Dr. Morton's rooms, to have a tooth extracted. She inhaled the ether about one minute, and fell asleep instantly in the chair. A molar tooth was then extracted, without the slightest movement of a muscle or fibre. In another minute she awoke, smiled, said the tooth was not out, had felt no pain, nor had the slightest knowledge of the extraction. It was an entire illusion.

"The newspaper will give you the details up to its date, since which other operations have been performed with uniform success."

Text of Robert Liston's letter (21 December 1846): "My dear Sir,—I tried the ether inhalation to-day in a case of amputation of the thigh, and in another requiring evulsion of both sides of the great toe-nail, one of the most painful operations in surgery, and with the most perfect and satisfactory results. It is a great matter to be able thus to destroy sensibility to such an extent, and without, apparently, any bad result. It is a fine thing for operating surgeons, and I



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J. V. C. SMITH, M.D.

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AUSTIN FLINT, *Secretary*.

Buffalo, September, 1846.

FRANK H. HAMILTON, *Dean*.

Feb. 3—3t

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FACULTY.

HENRY H. CHILDS, M.D., Prof. of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.

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By order of the Faculty,

Woodstock, Jan., 1847.

Jan. 27—4t

B. R. PALMER.

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The Spring Session, for 1847, will commence on the last Thursday in February, and continue sixteen weeks, under the following arrangement.

JOSEPH PERKINS, M.D., Prof. of Materia Medica, Therapeutics and Obstetrics.

EZRA S. CARR, M.D., Prof. of Chemistry, Natural History and Physiology.

WILLIAM SWEETSER, M.D., Prof. of Theory and Practice of Medicine.

MOOLETON GOLDSMITH, M.D., Prof. of the Principles and Practice of Surgery.

THOMAS M. MARKOE, M.D., Prof. of Descriptive and Pathological Anatomy.

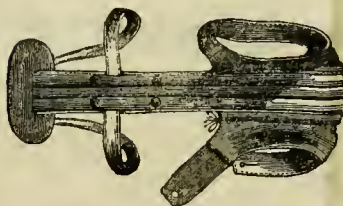
HOO. WILLIAM C. KITTREDGE, Prof. of Medical Jurisprudence.

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Jan. 27—tt

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Sept. 30.—tt

THE
BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XXXVI. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1847.

No. 2.

ALPHABETICAL NOTICES OF SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE
TREATMENT OF DYSPEPSIA.

By Robert Dick, M.D., London.

As an interval, unexpectedly long, caused by other engagements, occurs between the author's former paper* and the present, he thinks it necessary to remind the reader, that his proposed plan is, to notice, in alphabetical order, and as curtly and practically as possible, subjects connected with the pathology and treatment of dyspeptic derangements.

Aconitum Napellus.—In one case of obstinate dyspepsia, caused (as a *post-mortem* examination proved, and as, during the life of the patient, was suspected) by scirrhus of the pylorus, aconite certainly afforded some relief. Scirrhus of the pylorus seems to affect the stomach in two ways, or rather, to be accompanied by two different conditions of that organ. In one, there is erythema of the gastric mucous membrane, accompanied with what is usually called irritable dyspepsia; in the other, there is defective circulation in the gastric mucous membrane, and the accompanying dyspepsia is of the atonic form. It is in the former of these varieties that aconite is useful; yet I am not satisfied that its good effects are at all specific, and not dependent on that sedative property which it possesses in common with hyoscyamus, conium, and even humulus and lactuca. Like the last of these, it appears to be slightly endowed with diuretic and diaphoretic properties (most substances which act in the one way, act also in the other); and, perhaps, to these, as well as to its sedative powers, is due the relief it gives in the irritable dyspepsia of scirrhus of the pylorus, which is usually accompanied with a degree of febrile excitement, and hot hands, feet, and skin, during which both the cutaneous surface and the kidney act inefficiently.

The alcoholic extract of aconite is its best preparation.

Induced by the seeming success of the case above referred to, I have tried it in one or two other cases of suspected scirrhus of the pylorus, and with apparent advantage. These cases I afterwards lost sight of, and I am therefore unacquainted with the terminations of them, and whether my conjectures as to their nature were well founded. They were characterized by extremely slow digestion; a feeling of obstruction at the angle of the right ribs, and a circumscribed fulness and hardness there, perceptible to the touch of the examiner. They were also accom-

* See No. 9, Vol. XXXV., of this Journal.

panied with eructations of flatus and fluid, and the patients had the look of persons suffering from some organic affection of the digestive viscera. I may add, that in the cases referred to, the examination of the liver and of the evacuations gave no ground to suspect any peculiar hepatic derangement.

Calami radix et rhizoma.—*Calamus*, *acorus*, and *acorus calamus* (for these several names are given to the same plant, the sweetflag) is an aromatic tonic, undeservedly neglected of late years. I have frequently observed the greatest benefit from it in cases of simple debility (functional atony) of the stomach. It unites the properties of quassia and canella, but in a milder degree than these exist respectively and separately in the two plants just named. Unlike several other stimulants and tonics, it rarely causes any febrile excitement, heat of skin, headache, ill taste in the mouth, &c., even though taken in such considerable doses as to produce manifest tonic effects; and this is, in itself, a great excellence.

Aloes.—This substance is, with one or two abatements, a very valuable agent in the treatment of some forms of dyspepsia and constipation. In debility of the digestive organs, not accompanied by, or dependent on, general debility or emaciation, or on any organic cause, but arising from what may be considered a merely temporary dormant condition of the nervous and muscular energy of the stomach and intestines—in such cases aloes is appropriate, and usually acts well. The intense bitter of the drug seems to act on the stomach as a tonic, and to educate the biliary secretion, which, in such cases, seems to be secreted well enough, but to accumulate in the liver. It appears to be a very efficient purgative, the stools produced by it being copious and consistent. It is, however, not free from disadvantages, which ought to forbid its continuous use, at least as a sole or principal purgative. Its chief disadvantage is its causing, probably from some stimulant property, an irritation in the mucous membrane of the bowels, accompanied by an increased circulation in the vessels. I differ from those who consider aloes to possess a specific and local influence on the rectum and womb. I conceive that the hemorrhoidal and uterine discharges which are sometimes caused by its use, are explicable from the fact, that when, in any way, or from any cause, the abdominal vessels are preternaturally loaded, the rectum and womb are the points whence hæmorrhage is most apt and likely, merely from mechanical relation, and from the operation of the law of gravitation, to take place.

But this very property of aloes, which makes it ineligible as a simple and continued purgative, gives it importance in other cases. In chlorosis it is eminently useful. In cases where, unfortunately, a periodical hæmorrhoidal discharge is too long and firmly established to permit of a radical cure being thought of, and where somnolence, distended veins, and purple lips, warn us of danger, if the usual period of the discharge is exceeded—in these, and other cases, it may be employed with good effect. In cases of this kind, the aloes may be used locally, as a suppository, as well as given by the mouth. In few, or no cases, would I ever recommend aloes to be given alone. It is best combined with scammony, colo-

cynth, rhubarb, and with blue pill ; but not with calomel or the bichloride of mercury.

I need scarcely add, that however much indicated by dyspeptic derangements, or by constipation, aloes is inadmissible in cases of pregnancy, in structural affections of the rectum or womb, in irritable bladder, and in a disposition to strangury, from whatever cause.

Here again, just for the reason aloes is objectionable in the cases now named, it is serviceable in those of an opposite kind. Thus, in blennorrhagic cases of a purely passive kind, in some cases of gleet, &c., it is not merely safe, but directly useful.

In veterinary practice, aloes is extensively employed.

Amenorrhœa.—This disease is not only very frequently accompanied by derangement of the stomach and bowels, but it must also be principally treated by means addressed to these organs. In some cases, indeed, it is doubtful if amenorrhœa be not entirely a secondary affection, consisting of an extension to the womb of that torpor of function with which the colon may be affected. In other, and certainly the majority of cases, in which amenorrhœa is accompanied with chlorosis (for the diseases are not synonymous) amenorrhœa is owing both to a deficiency of blood generally, and also of the red globules of that fluid.

In amenorrhœa, the derangements of the stomach are two-fold ; there is perverted appetite (*pica*), and there is functional debility, one or both of which symptoms are probably connected with the languor and deficiency of circulation in the mucous membrane of the stomach, or with the altered qualities of the blood, modifying the special property of the gustatory nerves. To the same causes are doubtless due the muscular and nervous or functional atony of the colon, whence the characteristic constipation ; though this is also, in part, plainly caused by the watery and inert state of the biliary secretion.

As stated under the head of aloes, the use of the substance just named is of great utility. It is usual in such cases to combine it with the sulphate of iron and myrrh ; quinine and gentian, and also taraxacum, may be advantageously conjoined with it. These, with canella, cardamoms, cloves, &c., are the principal stomachic means, and though apparently indirect, are perhaps the most really direct means we can employ. But many things else may be brought into play, which time and space will merely permit us to enumerate, such as ergot of rye, savine, cantharides, rue, absinthia, horseraddish, and phosphorus.

Antacid.—In cases of troublesome acidity of stomach, about which every practitioner is often consulted, it is necessary to consider whether the acidity arises from injudicious food or from chemical changes in food possibly unexceptionable ; or whether it consists in morbid secretions of the stomach itself. A simple enumeration by the patient of his system of diet will enable us to judge whether the fault lies with it, and, if so, the cure is, of course, obvious and easy.

If, secondly, the acidity arises from chemical changes in the food, whether proper or otherwise, we shall find it generally manifesting its presence by a sensation of heartburn, by eructations, &c., at stated pe-

riods, of from one to four hours after food ; and this circumstance forms a valuable ground of diagnosis between the form under notice and the one presently to be adverted to.

The form now under consideration is due to a deficiency, both in quantity and quality, of the solvent secretions of the stomach, to some fault in the pepsin, or in the various acids which are secreted into the organ, and each of which doubtless plays a necessary part in digestion ; another cause is imperfect mastication. In consequence of one or both of these causes, the food, owing to the slowness of digestion, undergoes chemical changes before digestion has anticipated, as, if ordinarily rapid and vigorous, it would have anticipated, these changes. The heat and moisture of the stomach, in themselves dispose to chemical changes all alimentary ingesta ; but, on the other hand, pepsin and the various stomachic salts and acids, if normal in quantity and quality, are possessed of conservative powers, which preserve substances against non-vital chemical changes, though they subject them to their own vital chemical power.

This form of acidity, then, requires (besides *pro re nata* doses of any simple antacid, such as potass or soda water) the use of bitters, condiments, and perhaps mineral tonics, and even stimulants, such as port wine, brandy, &c. The object, in short, is, to give stimulus and tone to the stomach, and thereby, if possible, to render its secretions more active and more copious. Ante-prandial and ante-jentacular pills—as, for example, of aloes, rhubarb, and powdered canella ; of gentian, rhubarb and cloves ; of colocynth, myrrh and ginger, &c.—will be found highly useful.

The third and last variety of acidity, or, as it is called, heartburn, consists of actually morbid secretions. Now, while the former sort comes on only at stated intervals after meals, and is quieted, for the occasion of each meal at least, by a single dose, if sufficient, of any antacid ; there being, then, no occurrence of the evil until the next meal—this third variety is constantly felt, and is only very temporarily allayed by the administration of an antacid ; for as the acidity, in this case, consists of the stomachic secretions themselves, these, constantly renewing themselves, require as constantly fresh antidotes.

In this form, some chronic and serious affection of the liver or pancreas is probably either present or impending, and alteratives, and most carefully considered treatment, will be required for cure, or for prevention. Some time since, a patient consulted me for what he called “acidity of the bowels.” I asked him how it affected him. He replied that it caused gripes and spasms in the bowels and rectum. It is obviously possible, and equally probable, that morbid acidity may have place in the bowels, large and small, as well as in the stomach ; and since the occurrence of the case just referred to, I have had several opportunities of seeing similar cases of great severity. I believe that many cases of gripes and spasms of the rectum and bladder are due to this cause, the latter organ being sympathetically affected.

There is yet another affection which simulates acidity, since it is accompanied by a sensation very like heartburn, but yet which antacids do not relieve. This affection I conceive to consist in some perversion in the

nerves of common sensation in the stomach. I find it to be best treated by a union of sedatives and tonics, such as the oxide of zinc, and hyoscyamus; the trisnitate of bismuth, and extract of hop; in severer cases, by the nitrate of silver and conium.

It remains, finally, to enumerate the best and simplest antacids. These are, the carbonate and bicarbonate of potass, the carbonate and sesquicarbonate of soda, the sesquicarbonate and bicarbonate of ammonia, liquor ammoniæ, pulverized crabs' eyes, soap. Magnesia, as well as lime, is always an objectionable resource.† Simple demulcents, more especially those of sapid flavor, such as liquorice, relieve heartburn *pro tempore*, both by diluting the acid secretions and by provoking a flow of mucus.—*London Lancet*.

DR. GREEN'S BOOK AND ITS NEW YORK REVIEWER "JUSTUS."

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—The reviewer of Dr. Green's book, in the "New York Medical and Surgical Reporter," having for discreet reasons concealed his name, has thus provided against any responsibility for the blunders or worse, with which his article abounds. But as it bears, on the face of it, manifest proof of collusion with the author, ascribing certain eulogistic notices to grateful patients, and even indicating the individuals to whom the book was, and was not, sent by Dr. G., it is fair to consider the author of the book privy to the didactic averments of the reviewer; nor can he escape this responsibility except by a disavowal, under his own name, of the fictions here vaunted as facts, and by a disclaimer of the pretensions here made for himself, which he knows to be untrue. You will observe that I refrain from the discourtesy of alleging against the reviewer that he is "an agent employed by the parties," lest I should outrage both decency and truth, in imitation of his base example. Waiving all reference to the very lame attempt to acquit Dr. Green from promoting, or conniving at the procurement of the notices of his book, which adroitly accompanied the presentation copies to the editors, thus forestalling candid criticism by a *ready-made puff* furnished by the publishers; it is proposed briefly to lay before the reader the several claims distinctly set up for Dr. Green by this extraordinary polemical writer named "Justus," and entitled most strangely a "review."

1st. That medical applications could be made to the *interior of the larynx*, was not previously believed by the profession until it was made a well-established fact "through the labors of our fellow citizen *alone*!"

2d. "Dr. Green is the first man who ever boldly inserted into the larynx a sponge wet with a solution of lunar caustic!"

3d. "The *discovery* of the practicability of making applications to the *interior* of the larynx" is ascribed to Dr. Green.

4th. "Dr. G. has *discovered* that the mucous membrane of the *interior* of the larynx is *excessively unirritable*, &c. He has *discovered* a mode of saving lives," &c.

These are a few of the pretensions, made by the reviewer, to originality, &c., and connived at by Dr. G., with Trousseau and Belloc's book in his hand, from which we now proceed to make extracts, which will prove that *all* and *every* of these pretensions are fictitious. Moreover, Dr. G. is represented and declared here, to have been making his researches into this subject *about the same time*, without any knowledge of them. It so happens, however, that the researches of Trousseau and Belloc were made in 1830, 31, 32, and down to 1836, when they published their work on the subject, and received the prize of the Royal Academy of Paris therefor in 1837; which during the same year was announced in the London Medico-Chirurgical Review, and reviewed in 1838 by Dr. Johnson, before he saw Dr. Green in London, and before he had "happily succeeded," as his book tells us, in 1839, but not until the French work had been rendered into English by Dr. Warder for Dunglison's Medical Library. So that it is manifest that what are called Dr. Green's researches were made nine years after Trousseau and Belloc had made theirs in the Parisian hospitals, and two years after their book and practice were given to the profession both in French and English.

But let us now look at the extracts from the work in question, and test the claims set up for Dr. G. In their preface to the edition of 1837, the authors say, "We claim being the first to prescribe and employ topical medications in chronic diseases of the larynx." "We have ascertained that the *mucous membrane of the larynx* is accessible to topical applications, and should be treated like conjunctivitis, diseases of the pharynx," &c. Here it is manifest that the *interior* of the larynx is spoken of, for the "mucous membrane" is not on its *exterior*. Again, "Various methods have been devised to apply the caustic to the larynx. When we wish to operate upon the upper part of the larynx and the epiglottis, we take," &c. [here describing the form of instrument.] "When the porte caustic has passed the epiglottis, its extremity is to be depressed, which *buries* it in the upper part of the larynx." But the following sentence will itself suffice to show that the last pretence to *discovery* of what is elegantly styled the "excessive unirritability" of the mucous membrane in the *interior* of the larynx, is equally fictitious. "We must not confound the organic sensibility of the larynx that sympathetically causes the cough, with the *animal sensibility* of this organ, which is *very obtuse*. One must have practised, or seen these cauteries performed, to have any idea of their harmlessness, and of the little pain which results. We are very much afraid of cautery, for it is exceedingly painful on the skin or mucous openings, though *scarcely felt* in the pharynx, larynx, or neck of the uterus."

But to show that not a vestige of originality can be alleged for Dr. G., it will be seen in this work, that Trousseau and Belloc distinctly declare that they have ascertained a "method of bringing medications in form of vapor, powder or *liquid*, in contact with the *mucous membrane of the larynx*, without interrupting respiration. A method of treating the larynx by topical remedies, as we do the canal of the urethra, thus opening a new therapeutic avenue to laryngeal affections and rendering them curable."

The identity of practice is scarcely less perfect than the identity of words in which it is described in 1836, by Trousseau and Belloc, and in 1846, just ten years after, by Dr. Green. The whalebone, by the former, is directed to be bent at an angle of 45° , while the latter bends his over "a circle of four inches in diameter"! And as to the nitrate of silver in solution, the French authors say "we use it of various strengths; *sometimes* we put a drachm of the nitrate to two drachms of water, and sometimes half this strength," while Dr. G. talks of scruples as this reviewer says, but the book tells of "various degrees of strength."

Having thus shown that everything claimed for Dr. G. as discoveries, by his complaisant reviewer, has been explicitly anticipated in terms; we now proceed to prove, by extracts from the same work, that Trousseau and Belloc claimed not only to "make medicinal applications to the *interior* of the larynx," but even to the upper portion of the trachea. See page 136, where they modestly succumb to the older pretensions of Aretæus and Bretonneau to originality, and only claim to have improved upon their methods, and succeeded in introducing collyria *into the larynx*, as easily as into the eyes. And on page 49 they relate a case of successful "catheterism of the air passages, for the detection of a tumor suspected within the trachea," in which a gum-elastic sound was not only passed *into the larynx, down to the vocal cords*, the *ultima thule* of Dr. G.'s boasted feats of agility, but *through the trachea and into the bronchia*.

To show the recklessness of this reviewer, we now allude to his assertion that "*not one* of the men" who deny Dr. G.'s claim to have *discovered* anything, but has "irretrievably committed himself to the former position that it was never done at all, &c." Now this, and all the other attempts *by* or *for* Dr. G. to make it appear that any reputable anatomist or physiologist ever denied the possibility of topical medication to the interior of the larynx to the extent claimed, since the proofs furnished in 1837, by the publication of Trousseau and Belloc's work, are fabrications, as are the citations made in quotation marks, and ascribed here to certain nameless persons. And the ascription of such ignorance to those of us who have publicly exposed the plagiarism, is wholly untrue. The writer of this article was the first to "assail the originality of Dr. G." when the monstrous and ludicrous claim was put forth of his having "discovered" what had for years been the common property of the profession, before Dr. G. had ever heard of it by his own confession. The same lamentable want of information is betrayed by his eulogists, one of whom compares him to the illustrious Jenner!—a silly conceit, in which the reviewer profoundly concurs.

At the time the first article of "Medicus" was sent to the New York Commercial Advertiser, in reply to the anonymous notice furnished by the publishers, the writer withheld his name, only because he did not covet the imputation of obtruding himself before the public, and in the hope that Dr. G. would make the *amende honorable* by promptly disclaiming the fictitious pretension so indiscreetly made. At the same time the editors were authorized to use the name of the writer as authority for the facts named. Soon after, the book was read, and a review forwarded

at once to the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, over the same signature, designed for the profession. Nor had any human being been privy to these critiques on the book, so that the insinuation that anybody, directly or indirectly, prompted them, is as false as it is malignant, and only betrays the "wincing of galled jades," whose "withers have been wrung" by the truth. Nor has anything written on the subject been retracted or regretted, so that those who "lay this flattering unction to their souls," are thankful for small favors. The writer yields nothing to intimidation, though "open as melting charity" to the claims of courtesy. Strongly entrenched behind the ramparts of truth, however, he fearlessly defies the imputation of either unworthiness of motive, or misstatement of fact, in the course which duty to a humiliated and outraged profession demands. Nor would he do Dr. G. injustice for his right hand, "not loving Cæsar less, but Rome more"; but hating all false pretence in the profession to which he has been ardently devoted from his youth, he has here resented the outrage done to the majesty of truth, the dignity and honor of the craft.

"Ask you what provocation I have had?
The strong antipathy of good to bad,
When truth and science an affront endures,
The offence is mine, my friend, and should be yours.
Mine, as the foe to every false pretence,
Yours, as the friend of truth and common sense."

New York, January 28th, 1847.

MEDICUS,
(*alias*) D. MEREDITH REESE.

PHILADELPHIA MEDICAL INSTITUTE.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

WE have seen a pamphlet, the "Announcement of the Medical Institute of Philadelphia for 1847." This institution was founded thirty years ago by Dr. Chapman, to enable those medical students who remained during the summer in that city, to have the benefit of medical instruction, by lectures. The number of students in Philadelphia last winter, we are told, was over one thousand. And as it is made necessary that each should attend a course of clinical instruction at one of the two hospitals, it is apparent that but little advantage can be had during the winter months, and this more particularly so when the patient is too sick to be brought into the lecture rooms connected with these institutions.

Hence the founder of this Institute conceived the idea, that by uniting with himself other medical men of known talent, and continuing to lecture during the spring, summer and autumn, and instead of six lectures a-day there should be but two or three at most, a complete course of instruction could be given, which would be of inestimable value to the student. Thirty years' experience has proved the correctness of this great man's views; and although he and his associates have retired, yet it comes before the public with names which rank among the first in the profession in this country. Among the lecturers we perceive the names of Peace,

Norris, Gerhard and Pepper—names well known to the medical profession throughout the whole of the country. They are connected with the Pennsylvania Hospital. Professor Fraser is in the collegiate department of the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Neill is the demonstrator of anatomy in the medical department of that institution. Dr. Page is a young man of high professional attainments, and of great promise. He has been for several years the Surgeon of the Blockley Hospital, and Dr. Reese we are informed is admirably calculated to fill the station to which he has been appointed. Appended to the "Announcement" is a catalogue, containing the names of nearly two thousand of those who have attended these lectures.

The attention of your readers is called to this "Institute" by one who for years has known personally all the lecturers, with a single exception—and who, when he asserts that there are among them some of the brightest ornaments of the medical profession, assures you that he is not governed by any pecuniary motives, or misled by his feeling of friendship in making this assertion.

V.

February, 1847.

A NEW PLAN OF MEDICAL REFORM.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

MY DEAR SIR,—The causes that contribute to the origin and sustenance of empiricism, are subjects of interesting investigation at the present time. I think it a matter of regret, that many influential persons, fired by an ill-judged scientific zeal, have endeavored, by sober argumentation and rules of logic, to demolish the prevailing systems of quackery. All past experience proves, very conclusively, that to convince a man's judgment when his prejudices are enlisted on the opposite side, is a hopeless undertaking. Who ever heard of a single convert being made by a religious controversy? The antagonists themselves commence their set-to in all the over-boiling exuberance of christian charity—like a couple of friends sparring. One finally gives the other a dab which sets his nose to bleeding; he retaliates, and their light sparring becomes a serious matter of fist and skull.

Our friends of the *schools militant* commence their attack upon quacks, by the declaration of sundry sound and indisputable aphorisms—such as "truths are stubborn things," &c. To this I reply, "and so are asses"; there is nothing more difficult than to drive one of these long-eared gentry one way, when he pertinaciously sets his mind upon travelling another. Send a country lad to drive a pig: does he endeavor by compulsion to get the contumacious brute to walk off in the desired direction? Not he; he knows by experience that he would only get his labor for his pains—the pig, like Falstaff, will "give no man a reason on compulsion." The only way to succeed easily is to make the spirit of insubordination subserve his purposes, and he catches the animal by the tail to pull him in the opposite direction. Any other plan, he will tell you, is all gammon.

The wrong plan has been adopted for the opposition of homœopathy. Denunciations have been forged, and hurled with thundering sound, but no effect, at the credulity which enshrouds mens' faculties, and leaves them blind and willing victims to the doctrine of infinitesimal doses. The system has been handled with rough ceremony, and the monstrous faith in less-than-nothing doses assailed with the fury and indignation so easily excited by a threatened invasion of pecuniary interest; but the gaping crowd still swallow the little powders, and Herr Homœopath laughs in his sleeve as he pockets the fat fees so easily fished from the pockets of credulous hypochondriacs and hysterical women.

You are wrong, gentlemen! Cease your opposition; admit the truth of Hahnemann's nonsense; nay, outstrip him in fertility of invention and deception. If a homœopath tells you that a globule of sugar, moistened with the 30th dilution of a given remedy, and applied to the nostrils of a patient in extremis, will relieve him; reply to him, and shout to the world that we have a remedy, so exquisitely powerful in its influence upon the animal machine, and only known to allopathic physicians, that the same globule moistened with the 300th dilution (!!!) and applied to the nether end of a dead man, will bring him to life! You must learn the game of brag, and always "go better." Try your d—st (excuse Kentucky vernacular) to persuade people that there is really nothing strange in homœopathy, compared with some half-hatched system with which you are about to astound the world. Catch the pig by the tail, and two to one the "Dutch doctors" will soon be found upon some other hobby, denouncing their quondam favorite as the most insignificant, irrational, and transparent hoax that was ever devised and attempted.

So with hydropathy. If Priessnitz swears that he cures his patients by pouring cold water by the gallon down their throats, turn up your noses at him, and tell the world that you are much more successful by squirting buckets-full of hot water up the backway. He assails the enemy in front, you behind—he carries the citadel by storm, you by surprise; and I appeal to all authority to decide which manœuvre is the safest and best. If he publishes tables of cases that show a success amounting to 75 per cent., do you publish larger tables, and claim 95 per cent.! Admitting that you do not adhere to veracity, and that you are charged with it; you may be thankful that it is so, raise the cry of persecution, and your fortunes are sure.

A good while since, after Harvey had enlightened us concerning the circulation, it was announced to the world that life might be preserved, *ad infinitum*, by the process of transfusion. Old people pricked up their ears, and eagerly stretched out their emaciated arms to receive anew the vital current from a sheep! What a captivating idea! The grand secret of earthly immortality resting upon the piston of a pewter squirt! How the sublime blends down into beautiful harmony with the ridiculous! For a time syringes "looked up." But it was soon discovered that this great idea was "as the baseless fabric of a vision." And yet this was the wisdom of Solomon, compared with some notions fashionable in our day of new lights.

Homœopathy is certainly a very popular delusion, and, like some other delusions, exceedingly agreeable, if we could only persuade ourselves of its truth. Who would not rather be cured, "*cito et jucunde*," by the sugar of milk, than to die, "*secundem artem*," under the remorseless fire of a "regular practitioner's" prescription? What if a man is told, by sucering opponents of the system, that the homœopathic medicine is a very near approach to pap, and that it is exceedingly appropriate to his infantile credulity! Let those laugh that win. There has been a good deal of speculation concerning the origin of homœopathy. It has been attributed to ignorance, superstition and craft, and some are even uncharitable enough to believe that Hahnemann himself acknowledged, before his death, that it was all humbug. I profess, Mr. Editor, to be an observing man, and I think I can explain the matter to the satisfaction of every reasonable individual, of course including yourself in the category.

You remember, doubtless, that in old times people had no nerves—the old gentleman in the play said that he never had any in his life. Nerves and hysterics are things of purely modern invention. The "vapors" and the "blues" owe their existence to the "conventionalities of fashionable society." The hyper-sensibility which has, in these latter days, come to be considered the indispensable of refinement and fashion, seems to have extended to the stomach and bowels. A while since, an honest, rousing dose of physie was required to make an impression upon the sturdy organs of a patient—the encounter between the doctor and the disease was a fair stand-up fight, soon ended with hard blows, and no favors asked. But the fashion of us moderns, which makes a man the creation of starched dickies, high-heeled boots and tight waistcoats—the thing of a barber's brush and the tailor's yard-stick; and angelic woman, a swaddling lusus—a heterogeneous compound of wads of cotton, French chalk, buckram, and strips of whalebone, has drawn so exquisitely fine the delicate cords of human sensibility, that the "30th dilution" applied to the nose proves perfectly overpowering. There are thousands of persons now-a-days, of both sexes, who, under proper circumstances, can die Pope's aromatic death. Of course they come to life again, modestly expecting the performance to be encored! Great heaven! What is the world coming to, when sacred sensibility is worn as a harlequin's dress, to amuse an audience, and monkeys are become the highest objects of emulation to mankind? "Just to that point [remarks an ill-natured friend at my elbow] which so far divests them of common sense, as to make men credulous of infinitesimal agencies." Softly, my dear sir, we must take the world as we find it.

Do you not perceive that Hahnemann's system is the offspring of necessity and of nerves? You would begin your reformation where it ought to end: if you restore mankind to a state of health, bodily and mentally, and blunt by proper education the morbid sensibility of the nerves, homœopathy will die a natural death; but destroy at once the little globules, and what becomes of human nature!

Besides all this, Mr. Editor, we profess to be a little wiser than our fathers. I fancy, Sir, that we require something a little more pretending

than sheep saffron and barn-yard poultices to suit the taste of the present generation. If we cure diseases by conjuration which they encountered with the awful list of pills, potions and plasters; why not? We can even quote precedent for our practices. There was a famous pill, celebrated in Pindaric verse, which, with your permission, I will copy.

“ A bumpkin came among the rest,
And thus the man of pill addressed :
‘ Zur, hearing what is come to pass,
That your fine pill hath cured the king,
And able to do everything,
D’ye think, zur, t’will make me find my ass ?
I’ve lost my ass, zur, so should like to try it ;
If this be your opinion, zur, I’ll buy it.’
‘ Undoubtedly !’ the quack replied,
‘ Yes, master Hoh, it should be tried.’
Then down Hob’s gullet, cure or kill,
The grand impostor pushed the pill.
Hob paid his fee, and off he went ;
And travelling on about an hour,
His bowels sore with pains were rent ;
Such was the pill’s suprising power,
No longer able to contain,
Hob in a hurry left the lane—
And sought the grove—where Hob’s two eyes,
Wide staring, saw with huge surprise
His long-eared servant Jack, his ass !!
‘ Adzooks ! a lucky pill !’, quoth Hob ;
‘ Yes, yes, the pill hath done the job.’”

“ Globules [remarks again my crusty friend] have discovered more asses in these times than did Pindar’s pills ; and, what is stranger, all are affected with the mange, the itch, or—something worse !” But, my good sir, this is not the fault of the system of Hahnemann. That fact does not condemn, by any means, the sugar of milk ; only the mal-practice, and filthy habits of the times. We must do penance, in mercury and sulphur, for past peccadilloes, and thank God if this is the nearest acquaintance we are destined to have with brinstone. Allopathy has done nothing more (we are told) in 2500 years, than to discover these two specifics, and homœopathy, forsooth, must teach her to employ these properly ! It remains to be seen what the “ Young Physic,” recently born under Dr. Forbes’s obstetric management, will accomplish. Until then, with an apology for the length of this straggling epistle, allow me to subscribe myself, with great respect,

Lexington, Ky., Nov. 14th, 1846.

Your ob’t servant,

OLD PHYSIC.

ETHEREAL GAS IN RUTLAND COUNTY, VERMONT.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—This great patent pain preventor has made its appearance among us, under the superintendence and special direction of two very respectable members of the medical faculty in this county, as wholesale and retail dealers, with power to sell individual and township-rights to those whom they may deem worthy or qualified to take charge of this curious and important article—said to be the result of a tedious and tried investigation of Dr. Morton & Co. Truly, sir, this is an age of invention and improve-

ment ; and, we had hoped, of benevolence, especially among medical men. But alas ! for the medical profession ! If this kind of quackery is tolerated by the brotherhood generally, I say alas ! for medicine ! However, in view of what is, let us ask—has there been an invention in the article alluded to ? Has our good friend Dr. M. discovered, manufactured and brought to light, a substance or article before not known ? Has his benevolent mind and skilful hand wrought into being a monster, leviathan-like in power, to be placed under the control of a few, whom fortune has favored ? Noble man, a noble deed. Already do we see even our own county papers teeming with loud-sounding certificates, lauding the “lion,” or rather the letheon of the day.

And now, Mr. Editor, I must protest against any man, or set of men, “patenting” an article of our *materia medica* ; much less the application of that article, either simple or compound. It is true that rectified sulphuric ether produces, when taken by inhalation, at first, a powerful stimulating effect upon the system ; and secondly, a narcotic influence, which soon succeeds the first. At this crisis, the ethereal vapor is removed from the patient, and in a short time the said influences pass off without apparent injury. While in this state of stupor, minor operations may be performed by the surgeon with, perhaps, less pain to the patient ; but I cannot, as yet, believe that this genteel mode of making patients “dead drunk” commends itself to the public, so much as to require the shield of legal right. If so, why not make all doctors “patent doctors,” and all medicines “patent medicines,” and let the whole system of “patents and patentees” have their full course, “run and be glorified,” and give to those craven spirits that thirst for gold, the offering that they themselves bring.

Viewing this subject in the light I do, I shall use, in all forms, all medicines, and all drugs, of which I now have knowledge, or may have hereafter, in all places, and under any circumstances, where the good, comfort, benefit, or best interest of my patients may require.

Very respectfully yours.

Pawlet, Vt., January, 1847.

A. S. H.

EXCESSIVE VENERY—SOFTENING OF THE BRAIN.

[A CORRESPONDENT, a Surgeon in the U. S. Navy, has kindly favored us with the following case, which occurred under his care.

Henry Butler, Negro, æt. 35, was admitted upon the sick report of the U. S. Naval Hospital, Port Mahon, upon the evening of January 4th, 1845, with disordered stomach. Ordered *R. Ipecac.*, ʒ ss. ; and after its operation, *sulphas magnesia*, ʒ j.

5th.—Is much better ; complains only of debility. No medicine required. Diet.

11th.—For the last six days has complained of nothing except debility. Yesterday was indiscreet in his diet. This morning is jaundiced. *R. Mass. hydrarg.*, grs. iij.—ter in die.

12th.—Same state. Continue mass. hydrarg. Is rather more debilitated. R. Quinine, grs. iij.—in solution ter in die.

13th.—Stop mass. hydrarg. Continue quinine as before.

14th.—At 7, A. M., was found in a state resembling catalepsy; is with great difficulty aroused; keeps his teeth firmly together; refuses to take either food or medicine. Pulse is slow and feeble; skin cool. Brandy p. r. n., and sinapisms to extremities.

15th.—Remains in the same state as yesterday. Continue treatment, and apply sinapisms to epigastrium.

Evening.—But little brandy has been introduced into his stomach. His surface is cold; pulse very feeble and slow. Blisters to nape of neck, and continue stimulus.

16th.—This morning slight re-action; pulse is more full; skin warm. Continue brandy as before. At 5, P. M., he became comatose; stertorous breathing. Continued to sink until 10, P. M., when he died.

Autopsy, fourteen hours after death.—Substance of the brain softer than natural, with some congestion of the membranes. Medulla oblongata, for a space extending downward about two inches from the origin of the eighth pair of nerves, was so much softened as to break easily under the fingers. The lower part of the left lobe of the cerebellum was found in a similar condition. The entire cerebellum softer than natural. The stomach and liver healthy. No other parts examined.

After the *post-mortem* examination, it was ascertained from one of the companions of Butler, that he had for the last six months complained almost constantly of a dull pain in his head, although he did not allude to it whilst under my care. He was not addicted to the use of spirits. He had been living on shore for two weeks prior to his admission into the Hospital, and had indulged in venery to an incredible extent, and had boasted of an extraordinary performance of this kind a night or two before I first saw him.

The case is reported more for its phrenological than professional interest, and I leave for your readers to determine which was the *cause* and which the *effect*.

DISEASES OF LEWIS CO., MISSOURI.

[DR. KNIGHT, of Monticello, in a recent letter, speaks thus of the region in which he resides, and its diseases.]

This County borders, for twenty-five miles, on the Mississippi river, which has bottoms varying from one quarter to three miles in width. The balance of the County is very equally divided into prairie and timber lands. The timber is situated on the margins of small streams and creeks, which traverse the County in many directions. The timber land has thin, clayey soil, except the small bottoms along the water courses. The prairie lands are high, rolling and dry, having a black, sandy soil, with an under stratum of clay. They are covered with thick grass, which remains green till the frost appears, generally about the first of October.

The past season there was almost a continued rain until the first of July. No more fell from that period till the first of the following October. We had the most extreme heat during the summer that was ever known in this latitude. The thermometer, for sixty days, commencing the 6th of July, stood, during some part of each day, above 90°, with the exception of one day in August.

Sickness, what is here called the fall diseases, intermittent and remittent fevers, commenced about the 12th of July, and on the prairie and high grounds not a family escaped, and hardly an individual. Many of them had the most violent attacks of congestive fever, which was treated by me with quinine in large doses—say from eight to twenty grains at a time. My practice has been, when called to see a person laboring under an attack of fever, to prescribe some diaphoretic during the evening; and commencing, as soon as any remission occurs, which will be generally early in the morning, and give quinine in such doses as to get into the system from twenty to thirty grains during four hours; then wait till evening, and prescribe a mercurial cathartic. In giving the quinine, I go upon the principle that the greater the fever the larger the dose of the drug required, so that it may operate on the nervous system, for I hold that all the fall fevers in this country are produced by the cause operating through the nerves.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

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BOSTON, FEBRUARY 10, 1847.

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*Meeting of the Counsellors of the Massachusetts Medical Society.*—On Wednesday last, although the weather was rather unfavorable, a goodly number of Counsellors were punctually present at 11 o'clock, the hour designated in the notices. Some alterations were made in the by-laws, which in due time will be published. Dr. Bigelow, the President, announced that he should not be a candidate for office the ensuing year. The object, in this annunciation, was for the purpose of giving seasonable opportunity for selecting a successor. A change of feelings, and of policy, too, on the part of some of the gentlemen who opposed the election of delegates to the last National Medical Convention, was as striking as it was gratifying. It is utterly useless for the Massachusetts Medical Society, or any of its most influential Fellows, to oppose such measures as are contemplated by that medical congress. When the whole medical public are determined to effect changes, in accordance with the spirit of the age in other departments of society, the sturdy advocates for the old usages and customs of our forefathers must give way. It is better to yield a point that promises to produce a great amount of good, than to excite ill will by cold indifference to the views of the majority. Happily, the Council were united in the proposition again presented, to send a representation from the Society. The following members were nominated from the Chair, and elected delegates

to the next National Convention in May : viz., Dr. Stephen W. Williams, Deerfield ; Dr. Enoch Hale, Boston ; Dr. Elisha Huntington, Lowell ; Dr. A. L. Peirson, Salem ; Dr. Royal Fowler, Stockbridge ; Dr. J. V. C. Smith, Boston ; Dr. Joseph Sargent, Worcester ; Dr. Z. B. Adams, Boston ; Dr. Lyman Bartlett, New Bedford ; Dr. E. W. Carpenter, Sandwich ; Dr. Wm. Bridgeman, Springfield ; Dr. O. W. Holmes, Boston ; and Dr. Geo. C. Shattuck, Jr., Boston. Thus the reproach upon the old Bay State, of tardiness in giving in its adhesion to the great national scheme for elevating the profession, can no longer be cast upon us. Other business was despatched actively, yet with due regard to the best interests of the institution and those associated with it.

We regret, in common, it is believed, with every member of the Society, the determination of that excellent presiding officer and learned physician, Dr. Bigelow, to withdraw from the Chair. Under his administration, the meetings have been conducted with dignity and satisfaction to all who have had the happiness of being present on business occasions.

*Influence of Occupation on Life.*—In the fifth Massachusetts Registration Report, several tables are presented to show the average value of life in persons who pursue different occupations. From the imperfection in many of the returns of marriages, deaths, &c., it is not unreasonable to suppose that this department of the registration schedule is far from being perfect. Beginning with clergymen, and running through a catalogue of one hundred and thirty-seven different callings—the distinct pursuit by which an individual is supposed by the community to earn his bread—the longest lived men in the State are sculptors. Perhaps, however, as only one of the craft has died since the establishment of registrations, this solitary artist's decease is not a criterion of the longevity they may attain—especially when the fact is recollected that he reached the advanced period of ninety-three years. The next employment conducive to, or rather not incompatible with, a length of days, is that of a midwife—one of whom reached ninety-two. Here, too, was but a single person devoted to that branch of industry, so that no valuable fact is established by this record. In 1846, the average age of gunsmiths and potters, was eighty ; and two pump and block makers finished their eighty-second year, which is a good argument that that kind of mechanical enterprise is favorable to health. Fourteen clergymen were carried to an aggregate of 897 years, which shows the age of each one to have been 64.07 years. Eight lawyers lived to be fifty-nine—by which it appears that there is nothing essentially injurious to the machinery of organic life in that profession. Twenty-one physicians had allotted them only 47.64 years. There are few or no holidays to this class of men. Professional cares prey upon constitutions operated on by other forces, such as exposures to all the vicissitudes of weather, broken sleep, irregular meals, &c., which individually war against a long life. A furnace man in 1844 had reason to expect that he might live to be 39.71 years old ; in 1845, however, he could only calculate on 32 ; and in 1846, nothing could be more discouraging, since his chance fell down to only 22 years, which is the shortest life in the whole column of 137 trades and professions. Teachers are on the gain in point of longevity, which may probably have been caused by the better systems of ventilation demanded from one season to another by those who are especially interested in the public health. Fourteen teachers, in 1844, lived to be 33.78 ; in 1845,

there was a very perceptible loss, the average of life being but 29.85 for 21 persons. In the third tabular arrangement for 1846, 45.78 years was a surprising gain, illustrating the importance of improvements in the construction of school houses both for air and exercise. Those styled gentlemen, in the old Puritan Bay State, seem to have spun out the thread of life to a very satisfactory period. Whether it is to be understood that they were simply consumers and did nothing towards producing, is not mentioned. It is nevertheless curious to ascertain, from a reliable source, that a gentleman has a better chance for a good old age here in the variable temperature of New England, than many who conceive themselves more entitled to whatever is desirable, from having eaten the bread of carefulness, and also contributed to the moral and physical elevation of the community. During 1844, these "gentlemen" saw 77.14 years; in 1845, 68.11; and in 1846, ten of them attained 66.20 years. It appears from this report that more carpenters and shoemakers die annually, in Massachusetts, than persons from any other trades. This may in part be caused by the greater number in those professions. In 1844, 76 carpenters died; in 1845, 79; and in 1846, 70. The average of life at that period, was 48.94 years. In corresponding years, 110 shoemakers died the first, 134 the second, and 133 in the last.

In conclusion, it may be remarked, with safety, that there is room for vast improvements in this new idea, in the United States, of registration. When the people are sufficiently convinced of the utility of the undertaking, and the legislature offer a little compensation for the collection of statistical returns from every town and hamlet in the Commonwealth, then the registration will be more complete, will assume more character, and will vie with similar documents in the mother country.

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*Royle's Materia Medica.*—So numerous are the works in this department, that one feels himself somewhat puzzled to ascertain which system or what author has the highest claim upon his confidence. But since we fully realize the fact, that our knowledge of remedies in all the kingdoms in nature, is necessarily progressive, and "that every day develops something both new and essential to have and to prescribe, in the management of diseases," it should be a subject of congratulation with medical practitioners, whenever additions are made to the common stock already accumulated in dispensaries. Dr. Royle seems to have been a man of uncommon industry, whose mind was constantly influenced by a desire to enlarge the boundaries of this already widely-extended field of inquiry. While he resided in India, his researches into the antiquity of Hindoo medicines prepared the way for a reputation which is now extensively known. The title of his work is as follows: "*Materia Medica and Therapeutics, including the preparations of the Pharmacopœias of London, Edinburgh, Dublin and the United States, with many new medicines.*" By J. Forbes Royle, M.D., &c., Professor of Materia Medica in King's College, London. Edited by Joseph Carson, M.D., Professor of Materia Medica in the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, &c. With ninety-eight illustrations." The work has been brought out by Lea & Blanchard, in the best manner. It is a large octavo, containing 689 well-filled pages. The internal sub-divisions of the volume run thus:—Operations of pharmacy; pharmaceutical chemistry; mineral materia medica; vegetable materia medica; medicinal plants, from ranunculaceæ to fungi; products of fermentation; etherification; acetous



fermentation and destructive distillation; animal materia medica, from porifera to mammalia. Lastly, physiological and therapeutical arrangements of the materia medica.

As a whole, it is a very copious and complete treatise, quite indispensable to those at all ambitious to keep pace with the rapid advances that are being made in medical science, and we unhesitatingly recommend it to our readers. We thank Dr. Carson for the favor he has conferred on the country by bringing it under the eye of publishers who will distribute it over the Union.

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*Hand-Book of Human Anatomy.*—By copying the title-page of this new treatise, the best notion will be given of the author's object in writing it. "Hand-Book of Human Anatomy, general, special and topographical. Translated from the original German of Dr. Alfred Von Behr, adapted to the use of the English Student, by John Birkett, &c., of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Demonstrator of Anatomy at Guy's Hospital." Messrs. Lindsay & Blakiston, of Philadelphia, evinced their accustomed discretion in selections for re-publication, when they decided upon presenting this to the medical students of the United States. There is a degree of exactness in the construction of the work which is very necessary to the orderly progress of the student in pursuing his course in elementary anatomy. We are reminded by it of that extremely valuable, but quite neglected system of anatomy, by Andrew Fife, perhaps more minute than any distinctly anatomical text-book extant in our language. The translator of this Hand-Book has strictly endeavored to embody the descriptive parts in the fewest words—as the reader would readily perceive, were he not notified of it in the preface. No plates are given, which must be regarded as a defect. However, they are by no means so scarce in libraries as not to be accessible to those who may feel that they are needed to fully understand the text of the author. The book, which is well printed, and comprises 487 pages, may be had of Ticknor & Co., in Boston.

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*Yale College Medical Graduates.*—On the 20th of January a full Board of Examiners were present, viz.: on the part of the Connecticut Medical Society, Archibald Welch, M.D., of Wethersfield, *President*; George Sumner, M.D., of Hartford; Josiah G. Beckwith, M.D., of Litchfield; William H. Cogswell, M.D., of Plainfield; Rufus Blakeman, M.D., of Fairfield; and Richard Warner, M.D., of Middletown; and on the part of Yale College, Professors Silliman, Ives, Knight, Beers, Hooker and Bronson. Twenty-one candidates, who had attended at least two full courses of lectures, and complied with the other legal requirements, were recommended for the degree of Doctor in Medicine, and received diplomas from President Woolsey, of Yale College; and three, who had attended one course of lectures, received licenses from President Welch, of the Medical Society.

The annual address to the candidates was given by Rufus Blakeman, M.D., of Fairfield, of the Board of Examiners.

Josiah G. Beckwith, M.D., of Litchfield, is appointed to give the annual address in 1848, and George Sumner, M.D., of Hartford, his substitute.

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*Geneva Medical College.*—A pleasant and profitable course of lectures to the medical students having been closed for the season, an address was



made to the graduating class on Tuesday, January 26th, by Charles A. Lee, M.D., which was "an exceedingly interesting, practical and instructive production—one which must have impressed itself deeply on the minds of those to whom the speaker particularly addressed himself. The main object was to hold up before the eye of the young practitioner, as the guiding star for his future course, an elevated sense of moral duty, and to show that an unfaltering pursuit of the path which it pointed out was the surest, indeed the only true method, by which true eminence in the profession was to be attained. It is sufficient to say that this design was successfully accomplished, and this is the highest praise that we need to give to the address."

Before Dr. Lee's address, the degree of Doctor in Medicine was conferred on the graduates, forty-three in number.

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*Mr. Liston on the Respiration of Sulphuric Ether.*—In the London Lancet of January 2d, we find the following letter from Mr. Liston to Dr. Boott, appended to the transcript of the article which appeared first in our Journal. We have ourselves seen the original of this letter.

"Clifford street, December 21, 1846.

"My Dear Sir,—I tried the ether inhalation to-day in a case of amputation of the thigh, and in another requiring évulsion of both sides of the great toe-nail, one of the most painful operations in surgery, and with the most perfect and satisfactory results.

"It is a very great matter to be able thus to destroy sensibility to such an extent, and without, apparently, any bad result. It is a fine thing for operating surgeons, and I thank you most sincerely for the early information you were so kind as to give me of it. Yours faithfully,

"To Dr. Boott.

ROBERT LISTON."

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*Massachusetts Lunatic Hospital.*—We have received the fourteenth annual report of the Trustees of the State Lunatic Hospital. The Trustees pay a well-deserved tribute to Dr. Woodward, to whom, in an eminent degree, they say, is to be attributed all that has made the Hospital a blessing and a glory to the Commonwealth. The Trustees are happy to express their belief "that, under the administration of Dr. Chandler, the usefulness and reputation of the Hospital will be maintained, and that those concerned in its welfare may rely on his ability and his solicitude to perform all the professional and other services which properly devolve upon him."

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We cannot possibly find room in the Journal, as requested by a friend, for the article by Sir Philip Crampton, in the London Lancet, on "Frauds of Mesmerism." We always endeavor to avoid, likewise, copying from that work after the American re-print is sent out. The following communications have been received: one on Diseases of the West by Dr. Stone; one from Paris, by Dr. Clendinnen; one from Dr. I. R. Smith; one on the Treatment of Insanity; one on Apothecary Doctors; one on Homœopathy; and one on Dental Reform.

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*Report of Deaths in Boston*—for the week ending Feb. 6th, 54.—Males, 28—females, 26. Stillborn, 5. Of consumption, 15—influenza, 2—dropsy, 2—typhus fever, 2—dropsy on the brain, 3—convulsions, 1—lung fever, 7—infantile, 2—cancer, 1—inflammation of the brain, 1—disease of the brain, 1—croup, 2—scarlet fever, 2—old age, 2—teething, 1—tumor, 1—delirium tremens, 1—accidental, 1—bronchitis, 1—suffocation, 1—hooping cough, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 1—childbed, 1—ulcers, 1—disease of the bowels, 1.

Under 5 years, 22—between 5 and 20 years, 3—between 20 and 40 years, 11—between 40 and 60 years, 11—over 60 years, 4.

*Value of the Ethereal Inhalation.*—Dr. Parmele, an eminent dental operator in the city of Washington, gives his views on the subject thus:—

“That such inhalation will and does, in many cases, produce the desired insensibility, there is no doubt: but there is a question involved in this matter of serious import. That, it has in some instances been productive of evil, I think no one can successfully deny; and I believe even its warmest advocates admit that it is not without its danger.

“I have for some time had it in my possession, and am duly authorized to use it; but from its first introduction I have been quite doubtful as to the propriety of administering it, especially in ordinary cases of extracting teeth. It has ever been my opinion that an article possessed of sufficient power to suspend thus suddenly the functions of sensation, must be, in the nature of things, prejudicial to the animal economy, and if used *at all*, should be used in the most cautious manner, and by none others than those eminently qualified to judge of the expediency of administering it; and I have determined in my own mind that I should administer it to no one without a certificate from their family physician saying that in their particular case it would be harmless; and even then I should do it with some degree of reluctance. I consider it far more prudent to prepare for the simple operation of extracting a tooth by inhaling the innocent compound vapor of resolution and common sense, than hazard the serious, and perhaps fatal, consequences that might arise from the use of so powerful an agent. I have conversed with numerous persons relative to this subject, many of whom did not seem to be aware that any evil was to be apprehended from its administration. Possessing the right to make use of it as I do, I presume I shall not be suspected of an attempt to excite undue prejudice against it. My object is to bring it before the public in its true light, and should it prove to be what its friends claim for it, I shall not be found backward in joining with them in its praise; but for the present I feel it my duty to act with prudence, and would recommend to others, either in giving or receiving it, to observe proper caution.”

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*On the Injurious Effects of Camphor.*—Such effects of this agent, when used as a dentifrice, have been recently very positively asserted, and contradicted with not less decision. Experience is in favor of this latter opinion. A subject more deserving of attention, is its influence as an internal agent; for we find, that—“At a late meeting of the Société Medico-Pratique at Paris, many of the members cited facts tending to prove that camphor is a medicine, the abuse of which is extremely dangerous. M. Homolle related a case of phthisis, in which he prescribed more than twenty grains of camphor, in divided doses, in the twenty-four hours; the effect of which was, that the patient was attacked with frightful dyspnœa, continued nausea, and violent palpitation of the heart, all of which symptoms were with much difficulty subdued. Dr. Gaide mentioned the case of a man who was in the habit of taking camphor in very large doses, as a consequence of which he became affected with aggravated diphtheritis. M. Moreau stated, that he had seen a lady attacked with acute meningitis, which only yielded to the most active treatment, from having taken large doses of camphor to cure an obstinate neuralgic affection. Dr. Labarraque said, that a butcher, for whom he had prescribed six grains of camphor, was attacked with violent vomitings which nearly proved fatal.”—*Dublin Journal*.

# MEDICAL JOURNAL ADVERTISING SHEET.

## MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL.

APPLICATIONS for the admission of patients, must be made at the Hospital, in Blossom Street, between the hours of 9 and 10, A. M., on each day of the week, except Sunday. The patient, if able, should apply in person. If unable to attend, the application may be made at the Hospital by a friend, and the patient will be visited by the Admitting Physician of the Institution; and no one can be admitted without his certificate, except in case of recent accident.

In urgent cases, application may be made between the hours of 2 and 4, P. M., at the residence of Dr. THAYER, 12 ESSEX STREET.

Applications from the country by letter, must be made by the attending physician of the patient, accompanied by a description of the case; and if a free bed be wanted, by a statement of the pecuniary circumstances of the applicant.

### TERMS OF BOARD.

In a ward containing six, nine, or twenty beds, . . . \$3 per week.

In a ward containing two beds, . . . . . \$4 per week.

In a private room, . . . . . \$6 or \$10 per week.

*Security required.*—The amount of six weeks' board must be advanced, or a bond to pay all expenses given by a responsible person.

Letters from the country should be directed, *post-paid*, to W. Henry Thayer, M. D., Admitting Physician of the Massachusetts General Hospital. J 20—4t

Boston, Jan. 13, 1847.

## A GOOD LOCATION FOR A PHYSICIAN.

A PHYSICIAN, with a small capital, who is desirous of an eligible location in the country for the practice of Medicine and Surgery, may hear of such a situation by directing a letter, *post-paid*, to H. H., Boston, or the Editor of this Journal. Jan. 27—1stf

## DISEASES OF THE EYE AND EAR.

Dr. J. H. Dix will, from this date, relinquish general practice, and attend exclusively to the medical and surgical treatment of Diseases of the Eye and Ear. No. 2 Bowdoin Square.

February 14, 1843.

Sept. 29—eptf

## INSTRUMENTS, PHARMACEUTICAL PREPARATIONS, PURE MEDICINES, NEW REMEDIES, &c.

Owing to the uncertainty in the strength of many of our best remedial agents, we are induced to take this method of informing the Medical Faculty that we have taken great pains, and have succeeded in obtaining the following pure articles, which we can warrant of full official strength, viz:—Colchicum, and all its preparations, Root, Seed, Tincture, Wine, Vinegar, and Extract; the Root, Leaves and Extract of Aconite; very superior Eng. Extracts, manufactured in vacuo without heat, of Conium, Hyosciamus, Belladonna, Taraxicum, Valerian, Sarsaparilla, Colocynth Comp. and Monesia; Essential Oils of Ergot, Valerian, Copaiba, Cubebs, Vanilla, Origanum and Camphor; Powdered articles of the finest quality, unadulterated, such as true Turkey Rhubarb, true Scocotorine Aloes, Digitalis Herb, Eng. Squills, Valerian, Ipecac, Jalap, Gamboge, Colocynth, Opium, Myrrh and Jamaica Ginger; Kreosote of full strength, without the disagreeable odor, and nearly colorless; Imported Leaves of Digitalis, Hyosciamus and Belladonna; Root of true Turkey Rhubarb, Pareira Brava; Rhatany and Spanish Sarsaparilla; Vallett's Ferruginous Pills; Russia Castor; Blue Pill of extra quality; Phosphate of Ammonia, a new and efficient agent in Rheumatism; Liquor Ammonie concentrated; pure crystallized Nitrate of Silver; Acetate of Lead; Nitrate Potassa; Sulphate Zinc, Sulphate Iron, Iodine, Tartrate Antimony, Iodide Potassium and Strychnia; all the preparations of Mercury, such as the Proto-Chloride, Hydro. Sublimed Eng. of a quality seldom found in this market, Bi Chloride in Crystals, Proto and Deuto Iodide, Ammoniated, Red Oxide, cum Creta, &c.; Iodide Zinc, Chloride of Iodine, Iodide of Lead, Iodide of Arsenic, Iodide Sulphur, Cultivated Scocotorine Aloes, true Burgundy Pitch, Wood Naphtha, Sulphate and Acetate of Morphia, Aconitine, Pure Croton Oil, Veratrin, Valerianate of Quinine; Granville's Counter Irritant Lotion.

On articles of our own preparation we bestow a great deal of care in the manufacture, under our own immediate superintendence; as the Spirit of Lavender Comp., Syrup of the Proto Iodide of Iron, Cerate Cantharides, Dover's Powder, Compound Bockthorn Syrup—a valuable remedy for Scrofulous affections, cutaneous diseases, &c. which we furnish to Physicians at 50 cts. per lb. and composition submitted; Eng. Poultice Cakes, a valuable and agreeable article for "Clergymen's Sore Throat." Physicians who want any of their own preparations manufactured, can have them compounded by us in the nicest manner at the lowest wholesale price. We can also furnish them with Office Fixtures, Glass Ware, Scales, Weights, Graduate Measures, Pill Tiles, Spatulas, Mortars of Glass, Wedgewood Ware; Iron, Porcelain, Agate or Stone Spirit Lamps; Self-acting Spirit Lamps, on the blow-pipe principle; Mium Glasses; Medicine Spoons; Sponge Brushes, for applying caustic washes; Veratrin Ointment, &c.—Lancets, Scarificators with reverse blades, Cupping Cases, Self Syringes; Stomach Tubes, which may be used with a common Syringe for a Stomach Pump; Silver, Britannia, Glass, and Gum Elastic Pessaries; Gum Elastic, Boxwood and Gum Elastic, Boxwood and Goutskin, Nipple Shields; Metallic do. with a prepared seat; Gum Elastic and Silver Catheters, male and female; Rectum, Gum Elastic, Wax and Catgut Bongies; Breast Pipes and Pumps; Gum Elastic Breast Bags; do. Syringes; Ramadge's Inhaling Tubes, a valuable instrument in the treatment of diseases of the chest; Galvanic Batteries, a portable apparatus for applying Galvanism; Glass Syringes, male and female; all sizes and varieties of Metallic Syringes, of extra quality and finish; Caustic Cases, Stethoscopes, &c. &c. All new preparations are added to our stock as soon as they appear. All the above are sold at the lowest wholesale price, and may be returned at our expense if they do not prove satisfactory in price or quality.

Nov. 11.—eply

COLORADO, PHILBRICK & CO., No. 160 Washington Street, Boston.

## VACCINE VIRUS.

PHYSICIANS in any section of the United States can procure ten quills charged with PURE VACCINE VIRUS by return mail, on addressing the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, enclosing one dollar, *post paid*, without which no letter will be taken from the office. Feb. 8.



# MEDICAL JOURNAL ADVERTISING SHEET.

## TREMONT STREET MEDICAL SCHOOL.

SUMMER COURSE OF LECTURES.

In addition to the usual exercises, the following Courses of Lectures will be delivered before the students of this School during the coming season.

On Embryology, by Professor AGASSIZ.

Pathological Anatomy, by Dr. J. B. S. JACKSON.

Comparative Anatomy, by Dr. JEFFRIES WYMAN.

Diseases of the Skin, by Dr. GORDON.

Medical Jurisprudence, by Dr. STOREN.

Microscopical Anatomy, by Dr. HOLMES.

Surgical Pathology, by Dr. H. J. BIOELOW.

The usual daily exercises of the school will commence on the first of March. Examinations or Lectures will be given in the following branches:

Theory and Practice and Materia Medica, by Dr. BIOELOW.

Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children, by Dr. STOREN.

Anatomy and Physiology, by Dr. HOLMES.

Surgery and Chemistry, by Dr. H. J. BIOELOW.

The students will have admission to the Massachusetts General Hospital and the Eye and Ear Infirmary, and opportunities will be provided for obtaining a practical acquaintance with anatomy and obstetrics.

Feb. 10—4tepp—cop.

## JOSEPH BURNETT,

APOTHECARY (SUCCESSOR TO T. METCALF), No. 33 TREMONT ROW,

OFFERS to Surgeons and Dentists, the best selected assortment of Instruments to be found in the city; consisting in part of Amputating, Trepanning, Obstetrical, Dissecting, Strabismus, Pocket, Eye, and Cooper's Cases; Scarificators, Catheters, Bougies, Stomach Pumps, Injecting do., Spring and Thumb Lancets, Dissecting and Dressing Scissors, Trocars, Needles, Bistouries; Dressing, Dissecting, Polypus and Throat Forceps, Tonsil Instruments, &c. &c., of American, English and French manufacture.

Extracting Forceps, of Chevalier's manufacture from Dr. Flagg's patterns, in sets of 12, or singly, of superior form and finish; Excavators, Burrs, Pluggers, Drills, Files; Cutting, Splitting and Punching Forceps; Gold and Platina Plate and Wire, common and fine Solder, Spiral Springs, Gold and Tin Foil, MINERAL TEETH, in great variety, (nearly the largest assortment to be found in New England), Grindstones, and almost every article used in the surgical or mechanical departments of Dentistry.

Instruments sharpened and repaired at short notice.

☞ All orders from the country shall receive careful and prompt attention.

Feb. 10.—if

## TO PHYSICIANS.

A RARE opportunity for the purchase of a most eligible stand for the practice of Medicine and Surgery, within 30 minutes ride of Boston, by Railroad, and in a beautiful and flourishing village, may be heard of by applying at this Office.

Feb. 10.—4t

## NOTICE.

A PHYSICIAN, in a flourishing village in Maine, in extensive practice, with little or no competition, wishes a partner in business, to whom he could relinquish his practice after a suitable introduction. A practitioner—a working man of ability and tact—of some capital, both in funds and experience, would find this a most desirable stand, not surpassed by any in the State. Apply at this Office,—if by letter, post-paid.

Feb. 10—3t.

## FRESH AND GENUINE DRUGS AND MEDICINES,

OF superior quality, carefully prepared for Physicians' use, and for sale on the most favorable terms, at 33 Tremont Row, Boston, by

JOSEPH BURNETT,

Feb. 10.—if

(Successor to T. Metcalf.)

## PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE.

THE first course of Lectures in the Philadelphia College of Medicine, incorporated by the Legislature of Pennsylvania on the 14th inst., will be commenced on Monday, 15th March, 1847, and be continued four months by the following Professors:

THOMAS D. MITCHELL, M.D., Theory and Practice of Medicine, Midwifery and Medical Jurisprudence.

WM. H. ALLEN, A.M., Chemistry, - - - - - Fee, \$25

J. R. BURROGHES, M.D., Materia Medica and Therapeutics, - - - - - 15

JAMES MCCLINTOCK, M.D., Anatomy, Physiology and Surgery, - - - - - 25

S. GORE WHITE, M.D., Demonstrator of Anatomy.

Matriculation Fee, \$5. Graduation, \$20. Fee for any single ticket, \$15. Students who have attended two full courses in other incorporated Colleges will be furnished with tickets to the course for \$40.

The requisitions for graduation are the same as those in the University of Pennsylvania.

The course of instruction in Practical Anatomy will be commenced on 1st March, 1847. Fee, \$10.

For further information inquire of

JAMES MCCLINTOCK, Dean,

Feb. 3.—8t

1 North Eleventh Street.

## LECTURES ON SURGICAL ANATOMY.

THE undersigned proposes to give a course of lectures on Surgical Anatomy, adapted to the wants of advanced students and young medical men. The number of tickets issued must necessarily be limited to fifteen or twenty. The course will commence on the Monday succeeding the close of the lectures at the Medical College; and there will be a lecture daily, except on Saturday.

Fee, \$5. Any further information may be obtained at his residence, 7 West Street.

SAMUEL PARKMAN, M.D.

Feb. 3—4t.

Demonstrator of Anatomy in Med. College, Harv. Univ., &c.

## TO DENTISTS.

A YOUNG man who has served an apprenticeship at manufacturing Mineral Teeth, and who can give satisfactory evidence of his ability to make *black-work* equal to any ever exhibited, will go to the office of any dentist in New England, and give instructions and a successful start in the business, for a moderate fee and their wages for the time spent.

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Feb. 3—310a







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